THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

Volume XVI | New York, Wednesday, August 24, 1932 | Number 17

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Previous issues of THE COMMONWEAL are indexed in the *Reader's Guide* and the *Catholic Periodical Index*.
Published weekly and copyrighted 1932, in the United States by the Calvert Publishing Corporation, Grand Central Terminal, New York, N. Y. United States: $5.00; Foreign: $6.00; Canada: $5.50. Single Copies: $.10.

OUR GIFT TO THE NATION

EVENTS of such tremendous importance crowd upon our attention so fast and so continuously that the necessary task of trying to understand their significance sometimes seems to be impossible. Yet the task of trying to understand what is happening in the world remains, in the strict sense of the word, vitally necessary. It is, moreover, a necessity imposed not by the blind force of doom, or fate, but by the determination of our own free will, as men and women, to play our parts as individual free agents, and not to be mere puppets swept in this or that direction by the social currents of the times—whether economic, or political, or combined of both these vast forces. It is true that the whole philosophy of free will, which, humanly speaking, is the main dynamic force of the Catholic religion, has been abandoned by millions of men even in the Western part of the world, and that this vital energy, which built up Christendom, is now, in the hour of desperate need for its employment, surrounded by enemies. Yet it cannot be conquered. It is God's gift to man. It may be denied or deserted by multitudes of tired or darkened souls. But the Church is its fortress. The Church indeed may be said to be its dynamo, its transforming or transmitting agency—receiving power from the Source of all power, and distributing God's gift to all men who will to receive it, and will to use it in conformity with the Will of God.

It is beyond all other forces incomparably the greatest. Even those who deny it, contradict their own denial by their actions. In a sadly perverted and often injurious mode, it lies behind and explains what truth there is in the nostrums of "optimism"—in the incantations of the various schools and cults of "wishful thinking," "new thought," "white magic," and of many varieties of advertising, and of political and economic writings and speeches.

Every now and then, however, there appears a revealing gleam of light amid the whirling events that keep the front pages of the newspapers blazing with huge head-lines—the news of wars and rumors of wars, revolutions, riots, governments falling, the international and national emergencies of all sorts which testify to the universal crisis. Such an event occurred in Washington when President Hoover accepted from the Knights of Columbus the fine statue by Leo Lentelli of Cardinal Gibbons, a gift to the American nation. It was a symbolic event in which, so it seems to us, there was conveyed to those who have the eyes to see and the

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ears to hear, the greatest and most immediately practical lesson which not only the Catholic people of the United States, but the nation as a whole, needs to ponder and to apply in action. Cardinal Gibbons's statue was a gift, offered to the nation by a great national body of Catholic citizens. It was accepted, in a most appropriate and cordial and understanding spirit, by the chief executive of the nation. A gift—and its acceptance. That was the note of that event. And behind the event were other things which give it its vast significance. For Cardinal Gibbons gave his whole life as a gift to others—to his fellow Catholics, and to all his fellow citizens. And Cardinal Gibbons's religion is, and was, a giving—a giving of the good things of God. That is the mission of the Church. That it is most truly more blessed to give than to receive, is the great meaning of Catholic Action.

Opinions may well differ, as they do, concerning many important points in the President's speech in acceptance of the Republican nomination. In another place in this issue we have indicated some of these points. But nobody who has read that speech, still less anybody who heard Mr. Hoover speak it, can doubt the sincerity of his pledge of all his best efforts not only to the nation, but to Almighty God, which brought his speech to its satisfying conclusion. That the head of a nation so great as this should thus publicly and frankly accept and proclaim a responsibility to God, at a time in the world's history when so many nations have forsworn or forgotten mankind's dependence upon the Creator and Governor of mankind, should hearten and inspire all those who still believe in an overruling Providence, and know that their own efforts to give of their best to solve the world's problems must be guided by a similar faith.

And the President reaffirmed that conviction in his speech in acceptance of the Cardinal's statue. "Cardinal Gibbons truly loved human beings as he found them," Mr. Hoover truly said, "in all their variety and with all their imperfections. He loved God, and to a degree that is seldom equaled he succeeded in carrying into the minds of other people the feeling that the truths of religion are really their primary aids in solving the perplexities of every-day living."

There is real understanding of the great Cardinal of Baltimore—the great American Cardinal—in Mr. Hoover's words. Throughout a long and continuously active life, Cardinal Gibbons was wholly and integrally an active Catholic. Because he lived his faith, and lived up to the Catholic's obligation to give the benefits of the Faith to all, his place as an American among Americans—and it was a very high place—was unquestioned save by that pitiable minority of really ignorant haters of all things Catholic which still lurks here and there in shadowy corners of the national life. It was through his instructive or, rather, his habitual realization of the universality of the Catholic Church, and of its organic life—his knowledge that it is a Person, rather than an organization, still going about the world doing good, Christ still with us—that Cardinal Gibbons could be so active, without intrusion, "in all the public concerns of his time and place." This was why "movements for social betterment found in him an unfailing and practical counselor." This was why "he championed the cause of labor in moments of crisis." This was why he labored for the best interests of the neglected and ill-treated Negro race. This was why—again to quote the President—"his life was a remarkable demonstration of the power of a quietly noble personality to expand its influence far beyond the range of his physical presence."

This reëmergence of the lesson and the spirit of Cardinal Gibbons at such an hour of national crisis cannot help but be productive of much good. Never before, perhaps, has such an opportunity to fulfil its mission of good-will—its duty to give of the waters of life, flowing freely—confronted the Catholic Church in America, as in the world. It is not an opportunity that can be adequately met by publicity campaigns, or selfish strivings for credit and applause. Such things are alien to the Church, always and everywhere. But the bread and the wine of the truths of God, and service, and self-sacrifice, and above all other things, true charity, together with unceasing championship of the weak and the unfortunate—these are the good gifts of the Church, and her children surely will coöperate with her, to give as Cardinal Gibbons gave.

WEEK BY WEEK

Mr. Hoover's Hat

WITH one phrase at least in Mr. Hoover's speech of acceptance every decent American will be in agreement. "I have," he said, "worked to the limits of my strength to produce action that would really help." Nothing could be more correct. Mr. Hoover has not taken the responsibilities of government lightly; and he has a right to expect that the nation will appreciate the patriotic earnestness with which he has concentrated on the work entrusted to him. But genius—which is probably only another name for adequate leadership—is not merely an affair of industrious activity. The question therefore is: can the people of the United States see in Herbert Hoover, as he has expressed himself in general and in detail, the leader whom they need and for whom they pray? To our mind, the answer depends entirely upon whether one believes that events of recent years have ushered in a different world order from the one known to former generations, or whether one feels that the whole of our amazing catastrophe is just another storm akin to many which have assailed capitalism and consequently to be "waited out" in patience. Mr. Hoover is an admirable waiter. He has either initiated or sponsored dozens of measures calculated to restrain a hard-pressed country from trying desperate remedies. But he has not moved from the spot on which he stood, ideologically speaking, in 1928.

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PERHAPS the best index to this static attitude is the repudiation of all suggestions as to what may be termed communal planning. This is to our mind a far more important matter than Mr. Hoover's vague commentary on the liquor problem. Nobody wants the saloon back, but the question before the people happens to be prohibition, and the only way to get rid of that and clear the scene for genuine remedial action is repeal. The acceptance speech had nothing to say regarding the shorter working week; its expression of opinion on the subject of rural reform was negligible; it omitted all reference to trade associations; and its commentary on international financial or economic problems was of no value whatever. The basic reason for these failures was Mr. Hoover's innate ultra-capitalistic belief that the "free play" of business forces must not be interfered with. Now it is interesting to note that the orthodox Marxian likewise held this belief, though in converse form. But modern economic thinking is distinguished by nothing so much as by the notion—which has historical precedent in the middle ages and other periods—that social engineering can profitably alter the said "free play." It is useless to tell us that the American past thrived without any such notion. So did the past of many other peoples; and it is by no means evident that the industrial achievement of the United States has any singular greatness. What we have got to decide is whether or not we are living in a present different from the past. If we are, there can scarcely be much doubt that Mr. Hoover belongs with our grandparents. If we are not, it will be difficult to select a more appropriate leader.

Christ in Art

WITHOUT having seen the original of the mural whose recent completion in the Old Congregational Church of Chatham, Massachusetts, has caused something of a stir, we feel entitled to an opinion on it. The news stories have familiarized us with photographic reproductions of the work, in which line, composition, and to some extent, spirit, are presumably communicated. In the artist's conception, Christ, unbearded and clad in soft shirt and corduroys, is preaching from a boat manned by modern fishermen, to a group of modern Cape Codders on the shore. When we say that the picture does not stir us at all sympathetically, we are not criticizing what has been called the artist's daring in thus departing from artistic convention in representing the Son of Man. We should always defend any experiment of this sort, if its purpose be the truly reverent one of bringing closer to the jaded or apathetic imagination the visual reality of the chief figures of our religion, including the first Figure of all. The Chinese *crèches* are said to have Chinese figures; the Black Virgin of Africa needs no defense; and we have seen Japanese panels presenting the Mother and Child with exquisite spirit in the imagery of that country. It is not, then, the artist's means that we object to in this case; it is the fact that she has not been able to put into her picture, seemingly, anything that can really distract our attention from those means. For "daring" of this sort can cut both ways: if it does not arouse the imagination at once to observe a universal truth through a series of especially selected symbols, it will inevitably focus attention on the symbols themselves. And that is what happens in this picture. Aside from the flatness and archaic simplification of mural art, which make a meaningless, imitation hieratic effect very easy, and a really significant and spiritual effect very difficult, to achieve, the artist has chosen this additional handicap in her symbols. Of the spiritual power and conviction needed to transfuse those symbols if the mind is to be carried beyond the first moment of challenge or shock, we find not a trace in her picture.

Gardenias in Wall Street

SPECULATING for the rise has continued to be popular in Wall Street. Improved quotations for stocks and bonds have now been features of so many days' news that the country is at least aware that money available for investment has traveled in pretty fair volume to the brokerage houses. This advance may mean something, and one sincerely hopes it does mean much. There is always the chance, of course, that finance may be as badly mistaken as it was during the six months of the 1930 bull movement, the end of which was vastly more catastrophic than 1929. Under existing conditions, the encouragement which comes to us all from seeing badly frightened money traveling about with jaunty recklessness may be quite stimulating. It may induce some men to go the limit and buy a new hat—which decision would click several cash registers and put a mite into a pay envelope. But if the market is not on a reasonably sound foundation, if at the close of another mad gambling session, real values carry stocks down to a still more prosaic bottom of an abyss, the business of the nation may quite properly send for another carload of crêpe. It will need every inch it can get.

Honor among Thieves

THE STORY does not concern America but Sweden, and it is interesting indeed to find that the Swedish press universally considers the incident a severe blow for Sweden's reputation. The King of Sweden promptly asked for the resignation of the Swedish Premier when informed that he had accepted bribes from Kreuger. Thereupon the Premier's first line of defense was the familiar excuse that the money which passed between the prince of embezzlers and himself was not for himself but for the party. When it was shown to him, however, that he had endorsed a large check from Kreuger in his own name and deposited it in his own account, he was forced to acknowledge that he had been lying, and the prompt request for his resignation followed. His excuse for his conduct, including the deliberate lying, was that he felt

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bound in honor, indeed had promised on his honor, to keep Mr. Kreuger's action in the matter secret. As a matter of fact, the gifts to the Premier were nothing else but bribes, and Kreuger secured advantages in millions as the result of a paltry 50,000 kronor bribe. It is significant to have a man who flagrantly accepts bribes for betraying his country and violating his oath-bound official duty talk about being bound in honor to his briber. Here is a striking example of honor among thieves. The Swedish Premier deserves a place beside the gangster who, fatally wounded, refuses to disclose the name of his assassin for the honor of the gang. What peculiar meanings have clustered round that word "honor." Duelists used to risk their lives on the "field of honor." "Debts of honor" take precedence over all other debts—they are gambling debts. Now a Premier who accepts bribes and delivers the goods therefor prates about his honor. It is encouraging to learn that at least in Sweden they are broken-hearted over it, and that this is said to be the first time that anything like this has happened in high official circles.

Great Charity

AN INDICATION of the direction in which much of the energy of those who are still enfranchised members of our existing economic order must turn, is given by the latest report of the National Conference of Catholic Charities. This was to the effect that since November of last year, the relief which Catholic agencies have been called upon to give to needy families—and so far have been able to give—has been steadily increasing until, at the time of the last available statistics, it had reached a new all-time peak. Here is reassuring as well as grim news: it is good to know that when the capital resources and the dividends of the trustees of our present economic systems are savagely reduced, they yet have not lost their courage and are carrying on, supplying the sinews of charity; it is grim to realize by such frequent announcements, of which the National Conference report is typical, that despite the self-congratulations of our supreme civic authorities, the facts are that capital and dividends have never been at a lower level and never before have so many Americans been destitute upon the face of the earth. The indictment that this conveys might be shifted to remote, and therefore vague, causes abroad, were it not a fact that our country has the resources in factories and farms to produce an abundance of the good things of the earth. While the social engineering which might have realized this plenty and order at home is yet to emerge, individual charity continues to shoulder its unwelcome burdens, unwelcome because no matter how cheerful the giver, it makes the heart bleed to see fellow humans without any refuge but the humiliations and the precariousness of charity, blessed though these may be. Everyone, therefore, who can bend his will and his resources to the creation of a better social order, he also will be rendering a charitable service, one which may be the most merciful of all.

Suggesting Russia?

A SITUATION which certainly challenges the nation, and may soon become a sizable menace to it, was called to the attention of the authorities recently by the railroads. From their point of view, it dealt with the unmanageable number of adolescents and young men, apparently homeless, who are now stealing rides on trains and camping in railroad sand lots—and incidentally running up the railway's accident and death statistics. From the nation's point of view, the problem goes much deeper. This is revealed by the hasty survey with which the Children's Bureau of the Department of Labor followed up the railroad's complaint. From an investigation of twenty-five widely scattered and representative centers, as well as from correspondence with others coöperating with the survey all over the country, it appears that about a quarter of a million American boys between twelve and twenty years of age are on the tramp. They are not, for the most part, difficult or maladjusted types. They are normal boys who are part of the wreckage of recently broken homes, or who have voluntarily left recently impoverished homes because their staying would be an added burden.

THE ITEMS of the problem thus created are enumerated by the bureau's admirable memorandum; but they will leap, almost of themselves, to any thoughtful mind. Most immediately, there is no special provision anywhere for the relief of this new class of transients; the food and shelter they receive is inadequate, often insanitary, and never extended for more than a minimum time, since no community is willing or able to add to its present heavy relief charge by doing what would help these growing boys most: allowing them to remain and make a place for themselves. They live on what they can beg or forage; they sleep in sheds or in the open with immunity in this weather, and risk, and sometimes get, pneumonia in cold weather. They are never in civilized surroundings; they are never clean. To undermined physiques are added the dangers of undermined morale. Rootlessness, purposelessness, which can wreck a formed and seasoned character, must work upon their unformed youth in ways that are appallingly certain; and there are, besides, the personal enemies of youth—the degenerate and the criminal—to be met with in tramp "jungles" and cheap tramp lodgings. It is a serious picture, and only a dangerously light-minded optimist can imagine that we know what to do about it. There is some hope in the fact that the Children's Bureau has put the facts before the public and some in its various recommendations. It is planning a publicity campaign to discourage other boys from taking the road; urging more thorough home relief; suggesting to national and local agencies the need of caring for the drifters more humanely, and of establishing interesting work camps, on the model of California's reforestation units. These things, in any measure, will help. But the picture, we repeat, is serious.

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SCIENCE AND THE SOUL

HAVING recently treated ourselves to a diet of Brisbane editorials, we emerge with the conviction that in at least one respect this writer of expensive comment is original. In him alone among contemporary American authors the old-fashioned allegiance to science abides. No other pamphleteer of whom we are aware, not even Dr. Charles Beard, looks to the laboratory with the impulsive faith which Brisbane has preserved from a youth lived under the spell of Edison and educated by the positivists. Of course science is still deeply respected and obediently served. But it has obviously ceased to be a myth. It is merely used without further ado, like the dictionary; and very few would now turn to either as toward a prodigious something equipped to create a golden future for mankind. The current attitude may be sought for in two places, sufficiently diverse to be representative—the poets and the public.

Notice, for instance, what scientific theory and experiment meant to Shelley. It is impossible to appreciate either his philosophic starting point or his development unless one reckons carefully with his enthusiasm for Erasmus, Darwin, Herschel and others. His verse is often primarily an elucidation of some point raised by physics and astronomy; his religion (for who would deny that Shelley was religious?) derived its enthusiasm from the conviction that the power man was gaining over nature would eventually suffice to reform both human and cosmic action. Today, in spite of everything that has been said about the matter, the poets are cold as ice toward science. The few who use evolutionistic motifs employ them tragically, and many others are utterly pessimistic about the kind of life which "science" has helped to create. It is no longer a question of the old antithesis between the artist and the machine. Modern people, even poets, use too many machines to care greatly about them. What bothers them is the emotional and spiritual vacuum which has followed a century of fanatical devotion to the study of nature.

Now for the public. The man in the street is profoundly worried, not about whether an inventor will produce a device enabling us all to travel faster or farther than has hitherto been possible but really and truly about the why and whereto of travel itself. One has only to glance at popular expression in all parts of the Western world to learn that the profound desire of men is for something simple and static. It had never occurred to the ideologists of our recently defunct civilization that a job was going to be so precious a thing in Europe and America that as many persons as now live in Great Britain would find it impossible to get one. Nevertheless the incredible has happened. And for countless millions the job has now become a symbol of an ineradicable, cherishable human "culture" which may baffle definition but which is none the less clearly known and felt.

Work is not merely the prelude to cash. It is the hub round which the permanent-primeval in life revolves. Listen to Adolf Hitler, Edouard Herriot, Commander Waters or anybody who is close to the "people." The values insisted upon are the very antitheses of progress, are old as the hills. Naturally enough the oratorical and literary expression of this reaction contains a good deal of nonsense, but on the whole the percentage of imbecility is probably no larger than that which was inlaid in the speech of old-time advocates of "progress."

It is hardly necessary to add that the conclusions one draws from the changes so evident round about us have a direct bearing on the doctrines of Spengler. His dictum that under the pressure of technology a cultural civilization, of the traditional kind, is impossible, seems borne out in so far as there stands revealed a deep cleavage between modern man's desire for culture (in a vital rather than a bookish sense) and his worship of science. The gulf is indeed so vast and significant that we can at present merely see that it is there, without in the least being able to explore it. Bolshevism, the logical result of nineteenth-century moods, is the concrete application to human life of the religion of science. This it can be because the development of Russia is so far behind that of Europe. But the reaction against Bolshevism throughout the Western world is nationalistic because it is fundamentally a turning away from science to the primitive. And the primitive is culture, misunderstood and often shabbily presented, but still culture. Mussolini preaches Rome and the Crucifix; America is slowly but surely reverting to agrarianism, romance and the moral dignity of man.

That is the state of affairs. What shall we say concerning it? Perhaps this: the human mind cannot run away from its discoveries, they are important parts of the great plan according to which Providence guides the race. The framework created by science is now just as permanent a condition of life as is the crust of the earth or the chemistry of the atmosphere. It differs from these only in so far as, being contingent upon human ingenuity, it permits of a pseudo-apotheosis of man.

This, continued in frenzy over a long period, is no doubt the chief form of demonism in our time. Against this radically inhuman act mankind is now protesting consciously or otherwise. Yet it would be almost equally deplorable, even on religious grounds, if mankind refused to thank Heaven for those energies which, embedded in the universe, prove such effective handmaidens to life itself. The culprit is not science or its findings but man. If the laboratory could be wedded to the spirit, the union would be as harmonious as any that ever presided over a golden age. Until that happens, or nearly, all of us may well fear that the ancient treasures by which the heart sets store—liberties, art, courtesy, even belief—may disappear under the tyrannical sway of the demon who lurks in the human heart and whose emblem is, too frequently, a machine.

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MONEY FOR RECOVERY

By GEORGE K. McCABE

If we all had enough money, we could all be rich, is substantially the burden of this article. We are well aware that our country's plant capacity and manpower for the production of real wealth, could supply a greater abundance of substantial riches than has ever been enjoyed by the peoples of a great nation before. Yet we have witnessed unprecedented numbers of our people on the verge of starvation, homeless and disinherited from the earth. Business leaders and the wealthy have seen their profits and assets disappear in an alarming way. In short, we have been witnessing a financial panic.—The Editors.

"WHERE has all the money gone?" is a question put to the economist these days in a fretful and hopeless tone. Many a curbstone economist holds that the French have spitefully withdrawn the gold basis for our monetary circulation, just as the Pope and Raskob were said to have conspired to break the stock market after the defeat of Alfred E. Smith in 1928. It is becoming clear, however, even to the casual observer, that the money, i.e., currency and checking account purchasing power, has been recalled to the extent of 35 percent since 1929. This action has been taken by the banks in forcibly reducing their loans. One New York City bank, for example, retired one-third of its lendings in the first three months of this year, leaving its customers $113,000,000 poorer in purchasing power. The threadbare explanation for this burying of talents by financiers who loaned so freely only three years ago is quite inadequate. Loss of confidence in banks' ability to meet their obligations is no longer a valid excuse, because depositor confidence in banks in most sections of the country was restored by April, 1932, through the aid of Federal Reconstruction Corporation loans to distressed banks. This is evidenced by the decline in the number of bank failures from 466 in January and February, 1932, to 148 in April and May. Besides, 170 banks have reopened in the last year. The recovery in some cases has been as sudden as the collapse; in Youngstown, Ohio, three $20,000,000 institutions, closed last September, have since reopened.

Another bogus excuse for banks' restriction on loans, lack of demand for loanable funds on the part of sound borrowers, has recently been exposed by the Young Committee in the Cleveland Federal Reserve District. After a careful survey the chairman in a letter to the bankers said:

> This survey ... indicates with great clearness that there is a vast amount of productive business available, particularly to the small manufacturers of the district, if banking accommodation can be extended to finance such productive business ... predicated in many instances upon orders actually in hand. It is a time for faith on the part of lenders of money.

Journalistic simplification and the bankers' own apology for further impoverishment of their borrowers rests with this easily grasped explanation: necessity for bankers to prepare for runs, and lack of demand for loanable funds. Far more pertinent reasons for bank hoarding are: One bank cannot increase its loans to customers at a faster rate than other banks in the same financial district without encountering an adverse balance at the clearing-house, and thus a depletion of its cash reserve. Secondly, many bankers have been frightened into a miserly attitude because their assets are worth far less than their arbitrarily balanced statements to the public indicate. The 35 percent depreciation in bonds, lack of any market whatsoever for real estate mortgage paper and the permanent decline of 35 percent in the general level of commodity and property values, preclude any expectation of a rapid appreciation of bank asset values. The mirage of "Prices restored to 1929 levels" has been fading from the bankers' horizon. Thus his institution's assets have shrunk permanently in value whereas the liabilities dependent remain fixed in amount. The specter of insolvency looms in the banker's mind.

Because the banks normally supply 90 percent of the nation's purchasing power, the banker is the key man in any discussion of recovery. Tremendous pressure is being brought to bear to prevent further slowing down of our economic system now running at 54 percent of normal. It seems to the writer that the bankers exaggerate the difficulty of their present position. Their situation is the same as that which they have encountered after every major deflation in the past. Disturbing reorganization, demands on the stockholders that they contribute enough to make up the deficiency in the assets, can be avoided in the usual way. Of course, the 10 percent to 30 percent decline in the value of what the bank owns cannot be constitutionally offset by a reduction of depositors' claims; consequently, the banker will continue to have the permission of the bank examiner to overvalue assets so as to show a solvent balance sheet. Bank-owned bonds, for example, may be valued for bookkeeping purposes at the high prices of 1931 (85 percent) instead of the current level (60 percent). The discrepancy between cash value of assets and what is owed to depositors will be quietly made up over a period of years by the retention of all the bank's net income by cessation of dividend payments. Besides, the lessened competition between the surviving banks and more stringent public control will permit a reduction in the rate of interest paid to depositors. Thus the net earnings of the banks will be abnormally large from now on, so that in five to fifteen years the moribund assets of going concerns can be decently laid out in the bank morgue and gradually re-

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moved from the bank statement. The resultant decline on the asset side will be parallelled by the subtraction of an equal amount from the earned surplus. Many a country banker has been able, by this process, to bring his institution back to solvency after his 1919-1920 indiscretions. So too was the Second Bank of the United States retrieved from insolvency after the post-war inflation of 1815.

There is evidence in the recent improvement in bond prices (a rise from 52 percent of par value to 60 percent), that bankers have regained sufficient courage to substitute 6 percent corporation obligations for the peasant-like purchase of United States Treasury Certificates yielding $\frac{4}{10}$'s of 1 percent.

President Hoover and the maligned Seventy-second Congress have made strenuous effort to cope with the banking paralysis. The twelve Federal Reserve Banks are for the first time permitted to lend directly to business men and industrialists. These applicants for credit, in addition to providing adequate security, have to show that they are unable to secure loanable funds from their commercial banks. Furthermore, during the last twelve months the twelve Federal Reserve Banks have purchased over a billion dollars ($1,111,000,000) worth of United States Government obligations. This action has had the desired effect, the prices of United States bonds have risen 5 to 15 percent in the last two months. Such appreciation is expected to encourage commercial and savings banks to sell their federal securities and to replace them with corporation bonds available "at record lows." The Glass Amendment to the Home Bank Bill, recently passed, permits National Banks to issue $1,000,000,000 of paper currency secured by 3⅜ percent Government bonds. Because this move will yield an extraordinary profit of 2½ percent of the currency released, many bankers have already begun to take advantage of this law to bring their meager income above operating expenses.

President Hoover's pet, the Home Bank Bill, just signed, is expected during the next three months to initiate the flow of $500,000,000 to the pockets of mechanics and laborers in the construction industry. The 75 percent decline in activity in building has been due mainly to the dearth of mortgage funds. The effervescent Department of Commerce estimates that there is a potential demand for modern housing sufficient to provide the impetus for revival in this field.

In contrast to the government's efforts, business leaders have been able to do very little, except to prate of impossible tax reductions. Enlarged use of trade acceptances (eligible as security for advances from the Federal Reserve Bank) is recommended. More important are the recent tentative reopenings of plants as the move to coöperate with the Young Committee in bringing pressure to bear on bankers to liberalize their loans. The most that can be said for the shell-shocked bankers is that they have "let up" on their borrowers in New York and a few other large cities. During the week ending July 21, loans to customers of New York banks declined by ½ of 1 percent from the amount outstanding during the previous week, and for the whole country a 1 percent decline is reported. Nevertheless, the cessation of the three-year decline in wholesale prices since June 15 and the 3 percent rise in wholesale prices since July 15 (accounted for by improved live stock, cotton, leather and coffee quotations) may indicate lessened pressure on bank borrowers.

The 20 percent improvement in long-term bond prices is a wholesome indication of the passing of the financial panic of last May. During this phase of the depression the bonds of strong corporations should be selling close to peak prices because of the rising purchasing power of their fixed interest income. In the year of recovery following the low point in the 1921 depression, July 1, the New York *Times* bond index showed an improvement of 22 percent. Should the recent improvement in corporate security prices be sustained, public utility and industrial borrowers will appear in large numbers in the bond market as demanders of funds to make overdue replacements and improvements. This will be the surest sign that recovery is under way.

Because the upswing may be delayed and slow, provision of relief for the 13,000,000 unemployed and their dependents is not only essential but already in sight. Although distracted business leaders still speak of private relief, and employment drives, and bridge tournaments for the destitute, the late Seventy-second Congress formulated the answer to the fearful question: "What will the unemployed do next winter?" By federal loans to states and cities (regardless of legal or market restrictions on their borrowing power) the destitute will receive food and shelter. This is indeed the simplest problem facing us, because of the superabundance of goods. Were we short of the necessities, as, for example, the Russian people are said to be, there would be cause for alarm at the prospect of 25,000,000 fighting for the means of subsistence. Briefly, the way the Wagner relief provision will operate is as follows: The State of Illinois has applied for a loan of $10,000,000 from the Federal Reconstruction Corporation. We shall assume that the loan is made. Then, the proceeds are reloaned to the necessitous City of Chicago. As these funds are doled out to family heads, the Illinois farmers will find a stronger market for part of their surplus pigs, and wheat, because of the indirect sale to Chicago's needy. The farmers, let us assume, use the $10,000,000 received for the pigs and wheat to repay local bank loans. The relieved rural bankers invest the $10,000,000 in United States bonds.

Because the $10,000,000 were in the first instance obtained by the United States from the sale of bonds, it becomes clear "where the money to buy the bonds comes from" without expansion of the paper currency. It comes from those who receive federal funds for their surplus stocks of necessities, in this instance, the Illinois farmers. Thus, the farmer, his worried banker, the metropolitan unemployed—all are benefited by the relief.

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Nor will the burden on the government become staggering. The cost of caring for the 13,000,000 unemployed and their dependents, say 25,000,000 all together, may be put at the high figure of $.50 per person per day. This seems adequate when compared with $.13 per person per day allowed in Pittsburgh for food, and if rent were paid, another $.13 would suffice, leaving $.24 for fuel, light, clothing and administration. Accordingly the daily increase in government debt would be $12,500,000 as compared with $31,000,000 of borrowed funds spent every day on the average by the government for two years during the World War period. Probably, the cost of adequate relief to the Federal Treasury will be about $5,000,000 per day, the rest being supplied by local government borrowing. Congress will have to authorize relief loans of more than the $300,000,000 allowed in the Relief Bill.

It may be said in conclusion that the money for recovery will be provided by the following expedients:

1. There will be an increase in bank loans to deserving borrowers; the bankers being persuaded or forced to liberalize their policy by cessation of decline in values, by the example of the Federal Reconstruction Corporation and the Federal Reserve Banks, by pressure of public and administrative opinion brought to a focus by the Young Committees, and by the bank's urgent necessity for larger income to offset permanent shrinkage in assets.
2. Banks and other investors are being encouraged to substitute corporate bonds for hoarded funds, and low income federal certificates of indebtedness.
3. Federal loans to distressed communities will provide the means for placing part of our abundant surplus of necessities in the hands of the unemployed.

BACK TO THE LAND IN GERMANY

By MAX JORDAN

OVERPOPULATION lays at the bottom of the present unrest of Germany. The country is crowded. There were 23,000,000 Germans in 1800. In 1879 they had increased in number to 44,000,000, in 1900 to 56,000,000. Just prior to the war there were 67,000,000. During the war came a recess, due to the casualties and to the decrease in the birth rate, estimated at 5,600,000 souls. But now the prewar standard has almost been regained, with over 65,000,000. And that in spite of the loss of territory through the peace treaty, which lopped off a portion of Germany equal to the whole of the Irish Republic in surface and to almost the city of New York in population.

Before the war the Germans had colonies offering them an opportunity of natural expansion. Then there was the large outflow of their emigrants, especially to the United States. Today, no such outlet is left. Immigrants are hardly welcome anywhere in the world, except perhaps farmers with working capital who are willing to venture into the tropical wilderness of Brazil, Paraguay or the Argentine. And then there is agrarian overproduction the globe over and no desire on anybody's part for an increase in the number of sheep-ranchers or cotton-growers or rubber-planters.

Worst of all is the growth in the number of men and women seeking jobs. The army alone absorbed 800,000 men in Germany prior to 1914. Today, there are only 100,000 Reichswehr soldiers. Then there are hundreds of thousands of refugees from their native soil, German emigrées from Alsace-Lorraine, from Poland and other territories conquered by the victors. And there are many thousands of Germans who had been residents abroad, in England, in France, in Italy, in Russia, all over the world practically, but who were expelled as enemies, with their properties confiscated under martial laws, sacrificed to nationalistic idiosyncrasies. Finally there is an abnormal pressure on the labor markets emanating from those who formerly had relied on a modest income from savings, the rentier types, and the pensionaries, many of them women, who lost their last pennies through the inflation and had to start all over, competing with the professionals of long standing and overcrowding the employment agencies.

Very important, too, is the increase, by 7,000,000, during the past decade, of Germans above twenty years of age, while the population total of the country has only grown by 4,000,000. Accordingly, the relation between job-seekers and sustained family members has become always more disadvantageous to the former: more jobs than ever are required, and less than ever available.

Add to these phenomena the reasons which are responsible for unemployment in other countries as well. The number of large industrial plants in Germany has increased fourfold during the past thirty years, but the number of their laborers has hardly been doubled. The use of machinery in coal mining, in the years from 1913 to 1917 alone, has arisen from 2.3 to 83 percent. Since then the relation has become even more favorable for the machinery and always more discouraging for man. Things are more or less the same in brown coal mining. The potash industry, to quote another instance, produces today some 15 percent more than before the war, but the number of their employed is 36 percent less than in 1913. The result of all these changes has been an increase in the number of employment seekers, estimated at 10,000,000 since the outbreak of the war.

Thus what the Germans call *Lebensraum*, the space for living, has become more and more restricted. The contraposition is made in modern geography of people without space and space without people. Germany claims to have a right to be included in the first category.

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But, say the outside observers, is there no space left for settlers? Are there no swamps to be reclaimed? Could not the country become more independent of foreign imports by developing its agricultural production a bit further? Indeed, these are points worth looking into. Especially the latter. Even now one-fifth of the food products required in Germany are imported. This means that over 12,000,000 Germans depend for their nourishment upon foreign foodstuffs. The situation was considerably worse a few years ago. In 1927 the value of food imports amounted to 43,000,000,000 marks. Last year this figure was toned down to 1,600,000,000 marks. In 1930 and 1931 alone bread corn imports decreased 73 percent, cattle corn imports 66 percent. Home production of beef increased 20 percent, poultry 25 percent, butter 60 percent and eggs 30 percent. In rye, potatoes, oats and sugar there is even overproduction. But in almost every other field things leave a lot to be desired. Take wheat for instance. It seems that the average German does not care for rye bread. Everybody wants wheat bread. It is hard to tell why, but until recently the result was that considerable quantities of wheat had to be imported. The government, realizing that people cannot be forced to eat rye, if they prefer wheat, saw to the increase of wheat cultivation, and now, partly due of course to the favorable crop, there is promise that hardly any wheat imports will be required for the current season.

Similar progress remains to be made in the matter of vegetables, fruits and dairy farm supplies. The average expenditure for the importation of these products during the past few years was no less than 1,500,000,000 marks which corresponds to the sizable figure of over $350,000,000: $100,000,000 for butter alone, some $65,000,000 for eggs and about $150,000,000 for vegetables and fruits; cheese made up the balance. In the case of butter the German *Hausfrau* obviously gave preference to the brands imported from Denmark, Holland and Switzerland. No doubt the German dairy farmer so far has not been altogether up to his task. Neither have the vegetable and fruit growers. There is room for improvement of farming methods and, according to experts, standardization, in this instance at least, would be rather beneficial.

Now then, granted that there are plenty of possibilities for improving German agricultural methods and thereby of an increase in the agricultural output, with a consequent improvement in the foreign trade balance, it still remains an open question whether this alone suffices to justify the back to the land movement. That an expansion of rural settlements is desirable, nobody in Germany dares question. Whether it is actually possible to an extent worth the extraordinary effort, is doubted by many. Of the total surface of the country only 5.8 percent are unproductive. Some virgin soil is situated in the east, in Silesia, Pomerania and especially East Prussia, where the density of population is considerably lower than in the west. But hardly more than 10,000,000 acres of new arable land are available for farming purposes. Out of these, 1,500,000 acres are already being cultivated. Figuring on this basis one finds that probably not more than 40,000 new settlers could be taken care of, provided all other conditions were fulfilled. With an unemployment total of 5,450,000 even in the midst of this summer, such a prospect seems modest and not very encouraging for the propounders of the back to the land movement.

On the other hand, if it had not been for the population pressure, especially in the cities, rural settlement problems would not have come to the forefront in Germany ever since the end of the war. German cities are more badly overpopulated than those in other European countries. In France, for instance, there are only three cities outside of Paris with a population of over 250,000; in England, besides London, eleven such cities; but in Germany no less than nineteen, outside of Berlin. The record is certainly not enviable. In the years from 1870 to 1910 the total German population has increased by 58 percent. In the cities the growth during the same period amounted to 163 percent, and in those of over 400,000 souls even to 602 percent! In 1870 there were still 70 percent of the population living in the country (villages under 2,000 souls). In 1925 only 25 percent had remained villagers. Or vice versa: In 1871 only 5 percent of the population was living in the large cities. In 1925 the relation had grown to 27 percent. In other words, every fourth German lives in one of the large cities. Today the relation between town and country is about 65 to 35 percent of the total population.

Obviously this growth of the cities is primarily due to the expansion of industrialism. But now we are witnessing the setback. The cities are overcrowded. Employment for the superfluous population is lacking. Naturally the back to the land tendency grows as a result of these unsatisfactory conditions. Since 1925 statisticians have been able to observe a recession of the inflow of city populations. Five years later the cities even began to lose residents. In 1930, of fifty large German cities included in a special survey, only sixteen showed an increase, and a modest one at that. For the totality of German cities in that year, the number of departing residents was larger than the number of new arrivals by 60,000. Berlin lost two per thousand of its population in 1930, and even more last year when the total of departures was 33,000. Taken all together, the German cities lost 102,000 or five and two-tenths per thousand of their residents in 1931. In the middle-sized towns (20,000 to 100,000 inhabitants) the tendency was the same although not so pronounced. The trouble is, however, that this movement away from the cities does not constitute a movement back to the land. The difficulties which stand in the way of the systematic organization of rural settlements remain immense.

Ever since the end of the war successive Reich governments tackled the program with typical German thoroughness. With respect to the big estates in eastern Germany which many a soap-box orator in the

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revolutionary days had marked out for cutting up, one illusion after the other had to be dismantled. Of the 5,000,000 German farms only 0.37 percent can be counted in the category of large estates. Four-fifths of the arable land in the whole country is tilled by the owners or tenants of middle-sized and small farms. The 18,668 "large" farms which existed before the war, in the territory which was then somewhat larger, covered only a surface of about 14,000,000 acres. Today many a big landowner is forced through circumstances to offer his property to the government at a loss, to have it taken over by small settlers. But those are exceptions which, as a German proverb says, do not make the cabbage fat.

However, there remained domanial and other estates which the government made available for rural settlement on as large a scale as possible. A special rural settlement law was adopted by the Reichstag which even provided for expropriation of land under emergency circumstances. The reclamation of waste tracts was planned after experts had pointed out that by draining the 20,000,000 acres of land which were now only partly exploited, the produce of the soil could be increased considerably. Also heathy and moor lands were to be reclaimed, not to mention the 10,000,000 or 12,000,000 acres of marshes and swamps which are now lying useless and unproductive. Agriculturists believe that reclamation work alone would make possible an increase of the farming output by one-third, which would mean food sufficient for 13,000,000 people, or the complete elimination of foreign food imports. The realization of these projects still waits for better times, in view of non-available capital.

Special attention was devoted by the Prussian government to the settlement of the eastern provinces. Since 1926 and until 1935 the amount of 50,000,000 marks per annum was provided in the Reich budget for "help in the east," primarily to assist large landowners crushed under their indebtedness, and at the same time to promote rural settlement wherever possible. For the whole of Germany the back to the land movement expresses itself in the 46,000 rural settlements which were established, primarily in the east, with governmental assistance, since the end of the war. But during the past few months a standstill has become apparent in this evolution. No new appropriations are to be expected, and the stringency of public finances makes it imperative to do the work with less money than before. So far, about $10,000 were invested in the average settlement of 45 acres. Three-fourths of this sum were contributed by the government in the form of credits to the settlers. In view of the changed circumstances it has now become an urgent requirement to reduce this cost. More recent projects look for settlements of the size of 60 statute acres which could be established at a cost of little over $1,500, one-fourth of this amount being contributed by the government.

The saving thus effected would be considerable and certainly more in keeping with the present emergency situation than the previous liberal credit policy. But where are the unemployed who can put up even as little as $1,000 cash? The attempt has been made before to settle a larger number of them on the outskirts of the big cities. "Edge settlements" was the name coined for the purpose. Small lots in the suburbs were divided among the applicants, and again credits up to the amount of 2,500 marks extended in each instance. Soon it was found that the idea did not work. It is impossible to conduct rural or semi-rural settlements as a by-play. The guiding thought, of course, had been to offer a practical task to those who were temporarily out of work and would later on go back to their jobs in city factories. Now it is admitted that a very large number of the jobless will probably remain jobless for the rest of their lives if they insist on industrial employment. Most of the "edge settlers" will sooner or later return to their city dwellings, a hopeless, dissatisfied lot, and an easy prey for agitators and demagogues.

More recently projects of so-called structural rural settlements have attracted the attention of the pioneering element among the younger generation. Small groups have organized on a coöperative basis, to start from the bottom, limiting their requirements to the utmost necessities, giving up all ideas of comfort for years to come and working hard for a better future. Obviously, however, this system could only be applied by an energetic and enlightened minority. It will not solve the problem for the unemployed masses who are lacking the initiative, the courage and the endurance required for such enterprises. And there the matter stands. The subject may be dismissed without even touching upon some other fundamental difficulties, as, for instance, the unemployment of tens of thousands of farm-hands who consider the settler coming from the cities as their competitor, or the incompetency of the average industrial worker to adapt himself to country life (only craftsmen make an exception), or the problem arising out of the difference in psychology between the east and the west, the north and the south, in Germany, since a Bavarian farmer will hardly ever feel at home in Pomerania or a Rhinelander in East Prussian surroundings, which makes every one of them hesitant to give up their homes for an uncertain residence in lands which are to their mind strange and far-off.

Conditions will change within very few years. The drop in the German birth rate is alarming. According to the International Hygiene Office of the League of Nations, Germany is now on top of the list for the whole world. As compared with pre-war statistics the yearly average of births per head is now by 47 percent lower. It is true that the mortality rate has also decreased, yet the outlook is anything but encouraging. City life has not contributed toward strengthening family ties, and has weakened the sense of responsibility toward the community. The results are appalling. Soon the surplus will give way to a shortage of men. Maybe such an experience will open the eyes of birth control advocates. But that is another chapter.

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LITURGY AND THE DEPRESSION: II

By WILLIAM MICHAEL DUCEY

SOME time ago there appeared in THE COMMONWEAL an article by the present writer entitled as above, in which he attempted to show the advantages of the liturgy of the Catholic Church as a means most admirably adapted to help us out of the depression. Since writing that article, he has had the good fortune of visiting the well-known Archabbey of Beuron in southern Germany, from where he now writes; and he would share with the readers of THE COMMONWEAL the precious experience of liturgical life that has been his during his few weeks sojourn here. For not only has this experience been one of rarest aesthetic satisfaction—an almost daily witnessing of ceremonial at its grandest, hearing liturgical chant sublimely sung—but a most welcome and unexpected confirmation of the anti-depression theory already referred to. That is to say, here in Beuron you have in actual operation about all the principles and ideals the Liturgical Movement stands for: the Mass, the center and focal-point of the daily life of both clergy and laity; Vespers (in the afternoon) and Compline (in the evening), no mere obsolete devotion, but attended by large numbers of the faithful every day; congregational singing; retreats for all—retreats in which the great Action of Christ and of His Church forms the essence and the groundwork. But besides all this, besides the conviction that there is taking place here a phenomenon that would renew the fires of hope and enthusiasm in the breast of the most disheartened liturgical enthusiast, there is another fact that forces its way sooner or later into the consciousness of the least observant visitor. It is, that in Beuron there is peace, and a spirit of quiet restful ease of soul, and modest good cheer, optimism as unmistakable as it is unobtrusive. Which (I believe) is the same as saying, that here in Beuron there is no such thing as depression.

Try as you will, you cannot escape the reality of these two impressions. Should you try while here to remain oblivious to the first one—the prominence of the liturgy in the lives of all—you would be forced to attention if only by the pealing of the abbey bells, multitudinous and sonorous, that seven times each day announce the hour of praise. And if you were fortunate enough to be here during one or other of the great liturgical feast days, such as Pentecost or Corpus Christi or the feast of Saints Peter and Paul, you would have been literally swept along in the stream of humanity through the portals of the abbey church and into the great nave, there to witness sights and hear sounds that would bring a suspicious wetness to your eyes, unless you have a heart of stone. Ceremonies performed with a precision that delights your sense of order, and yet without stiffness or severity; with dignity and a magnificence suited to the great occasion, yet with every movement depicting a warm and loving piety, a sincere devotion, a virile faith. And then, the glorious chant! A chorus of near two hundred voices swelling up in deep-throated cadence from the choir, taken up at proper intervals by the row-on-row of some twelve hundred people in the congregation round about you, well-pitched, in perfect tempo (kept so no doubt by Father Sub-Prior's master-handling of the great organ in the loft above). . . . And what is that they're singing? Surely not the Gregorian Chant, that for the life of me I never could get excited about! But yes—that's what it is, without a doubt. And how beautiful, yet how effortless, the singing! Hark! Do you catch those words they are singing now: ". . . et unam sanctam Catholicam et apostolicam ecclesiam"? Truly one holy Catholic Church: one in heart and mind, and expressing that unity together—shepherd and flock—in a harmony of sound that is the visible embodiment and expression of a still more beautiful harmony of faith and hope and charity!

And when you have stayed to the very end of Sext (a new devotion to you, but one which seems to fit in very well, as a kind of thanksgiving-song after the high Mass is over), you go out into the bright freshness of the morning as though you walked on air. How explain this unwonted but deeply pleasant feeling of peace and hope and joy most heartfelt? Is it because the chords of sentiment were stirred and thrilled as never before, by that concomitance of melodious sound and symmetry of movement, and soft glowing candle-light and blue smoke of incense rising up, all uniting into one grand concerto of praise? No, not entirely, you feel sure. True, all these beauties thrilled you, but did not distract you. They seemed like old friends, come (all dressed up for the great occasion) to take you by the hand, and lead you—blind and weak as you are—right up into the inner sanctum of the King and Lord of all. And there He took you into His august charge, put you at your ease with a cheery word of understanding and encouragement, then led you—holding tightly your hand in His—out upon a kind of road which seemed both rough and steep. Oft you would have fallen were it not for that firm grip upon your hand. Oft you would have shrunk back in weariness or in fear, but one glance at His steady calm Face put all your fears to flight. At last you reached the summit—it was Calvary, as you recognized. But what a different Calvary! True, all the monsters of hell seemed to be assembled there—the persecutors, the bloodthirsty rabble, the ruthless soldiery, . . . all forms of loathsome sin, . . . and a death's-head, grinning horribly. . . . But strangely you were not afraid, for that comforting grip on your hand grew firmer still, as you heard Him whisper: "Cling fast to Me—and together we will conquer and

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slay all these fearsome monsters. Behold, I sprinkle round about us a kind of mystic dew, which is My Precious Blood. . . . See now, how all doth change!" And in that instant you behold the darkness give place to blinding light, and Death fading into nothingness, and pretty flowers of virtue growing where sin once was. And Mary was there in all her queenly beauty, and crowds of saints and choirs of angels, all of whom bent low before the King (Who still held you close to Him) and sang a glorious hymn of praise and love and thanksgiving, the like of which you never hoped to hear this side of heaven. . . .

And thus musing over the joyous reality of this mystic experience (a reality you cannot doubt, for it is faith assured; and besides, you have already noted its strange resemblance to the lesser and so far uncompleted calvary of your own life), you find yourself mingling with a crowd of returning worshipers, happy like yourself, but not perhaps so silent. Everyone seems to be greeting his neighbor with a cheery smile, and words which give you another pleasant surprise (when later you puzzle them out with the aid of a dictionary). "Grüss Gott" is the universal and accepted form of salutation in these parts, and is equivalent to "Let us bless the Lord." Perhaps you will pursue your steps further, for there are shady pine forests a stone's throw away, and towering hills from which you can obtain gorgeous views and which can be climbed with ease, so cunningly devised are the paths (hewn mostly out of solid rock by the lay brethren from the abbey).

But whatever you do or wherever you go in and about Beuron, you will be made conscious of a freshness, a vitality, an optimism on the part of its residents and its pilgrims, that is like a much-needed tonic. If you are privileged to enter the hallowed precincts of the cloister itself, you will be edified and astonished by the unmistakable air of untroubled peace, that reflects itself from the countenances of all, from abbot down to humblest lay brother. True, as you walk in the quiet shades of the cloister garden, you will find growing there, instead of shrubbery and flowers, beets and lettuce and onions and potatoes; but this is the only sign of any temporal distress that you will see in Beuron. The magnificent vista of mountain and valley, with the bluest of skies above, reflected faithfully in the placid waters of the Danube just beyond the gate, broods like a benediction round about you. Snatches of joyous song echo down to you from the mountainside, where knots of pilgrims or of hikers have gathered, some to give further vent to their piety in the form of engaging little hymns sung before some wayside shrine of the Madonna, others to sing their folk- or school-songs, eat the lunch they have brought, and wholesomely enjoy themselves. They may be peasants in native costume, or children from a neighboring school, or undergrads from Heidelberg, or a group of business men from Munich (all of which groups you perhaps noticed at the Mass); but they have one thing very much in common—lightness of heart and peace of soul.

That is why I said a moment ago—and I feel sure you will agree with me now—that here in Beuron there is no depression. Which is not the same as saying (mark this well) that in Beuron there is no poverty, no people with virtually exhausted bank-balances, nor any immunity from the threat of Communism, Hitlerism, disorder and revolution. Quite the contrary: for the war, reparations, deflation of currency, stagnation of business throughout Germany, coupled with the unrest caused by these conditions, have wrought their havoc with the fortunes of the abbey and its supporters. But the anxious question "What is to become of us?" is one you will never hear in Beuron. No gloom, no prophets of despair: for these people know no harm can come to them. "Deus adest," they seem to say: "God is present—with us, watching over us now just the same as when we were in the heyday of our prosperity. True, we must stint ourselves a little, in food, in amusements, in social activities. We suffer, but it is God in His infinite love and wisdom Who is thereby purifying us, fashioning us into instruments more pleasing in His sight. Meanwhile we carry on, lovingly, trustfully, our great work—the great work of the Church and of all Christians—that of giving Him glory, singing His praises, daily offering unto Him the most pleasing Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of His Divine Son. There undoubtedly is the source (if you must know) of our strength, our courage and serenity, our inexhaustible good-cheer. Living daily with Christ Who overcame (and Who overcomes again mystically each time Mass is said) no mere passing temporal evil but death and sin and all the powers of hell; daily accompanying Him, walking with His hand in ours down the valley of the shadow of eternal death and emerging always triumphant and conquering. Why, indeed should we fear the trials, privations, disappointments of a mere mortal world? And besides, has He not promised that if we seek first His kingdom and His glory, all these things shall be added unto us?"

That is why, dear reader, you will be forced to agree with me that Beuron has succeeded in banishing depression, through Christ and through His Liturgy. *Quod erat demonstrandum!*

Sonnet

My love for you is like a crystal bell,
Whose slender throat holds but a single tone.
It ripples all the air—I love you well.
It clings upon a hill—Just you alone.
No rich chromatic interludes repeat
Its single theme in trailing harmony,
Yet eons hence the farthest star will meet
And vibrate with its rhythmic constancy.
Its single chime will long outlive our need
Of words or music when our spirits fare
To perfect understanding—then indeed
It may seem too exuberant a prayer.
We shall then marvel at our dullness here
That needed sound when silence makes love clear.

CATHERINE M. BRESNAN.

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HEALING A SORE SPOT

By FLOYD KEELER

WE HAVE become so accustomed to a world filled with sore and sensitive spots that another one scarcely arouses our attention, but many of those which do obtrude themselves are, in reality, but surface abrasions and can hardly be said to go deep into the body politic. Not so is the Near East—it has been eating into the world's vitals for centuries, and until it is healed it is hardly possible to expect that complete peace and harmony can reign.

One must go back more than a thousand years to find the beginning of these difficulties and one's search for causes is complicated by the fact that there are not only economic, social and political factors, but that religion has been made to play an exceedingly important part therein.

Christianity had its origin in the East, and in that same East arose nearly all the heresies which harassed the early Church. To our modern mind a heresy may seem like a mere dispute among theologians, but that was not true of ancient times, nor is it true in the Near East today. There religious differences produce profound cleavages, and so the problem of healing the Near East's wounds is essentially a religious one.

For convenience sake, one may begin the difficulty with the culmination of the great schism in the year 1053, though this was the end of a long series of events leading up to the crisis. In that year the bull of excommunication was laid upon the altar of Justinian's great church—the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople —by the Pope's legates, and for the thousand years since then East and West have been out of communion with each other. In the West the Popes, in the exercise of their universal jurisdiction, have continued to push the claims of the Church as supranational—Catholic. On the other hand, Eastern Christendom, dependent for its separate existence upon imperial favor and nationalistic in its outlook, has tended to split up into racial and national Churches, bound together largely by the somewhat tenuous thread of opposition to Rome.

The Catholic Church has never relaxed her efforts to win back the Easterns to the one fold, but it is only since the World War that there has seemed much likelihood of her immediate chance to do so. No previous conflict so profoundly shook all political alignments or resulted in such complete chaos. Age-old conceptions of nationality and power went down overnight, and distraught leaders peered vainly into the mist for the sight of a guiding star.

Truly, when in 1922 Pope Benedict XV closed his weary eyes upon the world, war-torn and perplexed, the future seemed to hold but little hope. His successor, Pope Pius XI, had, indeed, need to display that "Intrepida Fides," which according to the so-called "Prophecy of Saint Malachy" is the motto of his Pontificate. No sooner had he entered upon his duties in the papal chair than his faith was made manifest in clearing the débris and making the beginning of a constructive policy regarding the Near East.

The new Pontiff had personal knowledge of the dissident state of mind. As papal nuncio at Warsaw he had been in contact with representatives of separated Eastern Christendom as crystallized in the once great Church of Russia, and his experience in library work had opened to him the treasures of Oriental thought. With unerring judgment he saw that the East must be reconciled to Rome and that in such a reunion lay the only way by which the underlying causes of her distress could be relieved. It was a problem to daunt the bravest heart. Intrigue, race-hatred and suspicion filled their minds. Feuds, wars, massacres, with their attendant privations and sufferings, were ever present. Politics, dividing along religious lines, ruled everywhere. Yet the problem, almost hopeless as it seemed, must be attacked at the root and, with Divine assistance, solved.

The Church has ever accompanied her preaching of the Gospel with care for the material needs of man. What is nowadays called "social service" is as old as Christianity itself, and the Pope realized that the first need was to rescue starving peoples from their plight, to bind up the wounds of the afflicted and to provide an opportunity for coming generations to live and make for themselves a place in the world. Others had the same vision, and several organizations were started with these ends in view.

In the year 1926 the Holy See saw fit to consolidate all such efforts, and the Catholic Near East Welfare Association was the result. It was made a pontifical association, under the immediate care of the Holy Father himself. Its purpose is to supply him with the means of carrying out the great task of winning back the separated peoples of the Near East. This work is of a very special nature, for the people with whom it deals are Christians; they possess a church organization; they are, indeed, but a step outside the Catholic Church.

During the past five years a beginning has been made, the field surveyed and many good works strengthened or inaugurated. So determined is Pope Pius XI to continue the work already begun that on June 28, 1930, he addressed a letter to the bishops of the United States, reorganizing the association in such a manner that it takes a recognized place among the great works of the Church Universal for the extension of the Kingdom of God on earth. He expressly states that "the Catholic Near East Welfare Association remain as a permanent association for the spiritual needs and necessities of the churches, missions, institutions and persons depending on the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church, and on the Pontifical Commission for Russia."

To emphasize its importance, the association was placed under the immediate and personal direction of His Eminence Cardinal Hayes, Archbishop of New York. And about the same time His Eminence was made a member of the Sacred Congregation above-named, thus intensifying the intimacy of his connection with it. This same letter gave the association a place in the annual Mission Sunday observance and collections, and placed it upon an equal footing with the other world-wide missionary efforts of the Church. Upon the national secretary of the association was laid the duty, in a letter of His Holiness under date of August 20, 1931, "to focus attention upon the state of Catholicity in the Near East and in Russia, and by publicity through the Catholic press and other sources, inform the faithful of the real conditions, moral and religious, in the Near East."

Mutual ignorance has had much to do with the continuance of the Near East as a sore spot in the world; indifference, born of that ignorance, has fostered that condition. If these efforts on the part of the Sovereign Pontiff to break down that indifference and dispel that ignorance shall usher in what he himself has called "the dawn of this day so desired, when Greeks and Slavs, Rumanians, and the children of other Near Eastern nations, separated up to this time, shall return, amid our acclamations, not only in small number, but in the great majority, to their ancient intimacy with the Roman Church," not Catholics alone but the world at large will rise to bless his name. In such an issue lies, in a large measure, the future peace, not only of religion, but of all mankind.

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COMMUNICATIONS

A POLITICAL EMPIRE DISAPPEARS

Ottawa, Canada.

TO the Editor: Mr. Thomas F. Healy, in his letter in THE COMMONWEAL of July 6, shows an entire misunderstanding of the meaning of the oath of allegiance. He is evidently under the impression that the allegiance which it pledges is allegiance to Great Britain, since he says, "It is as preposterous to us as an oath of allegiance to Ireland would be to the British people, had we the right to impose it on them." But the allegiance is not either to the government or the people of Great Britain. It is, in the case of an Irishman, allegiance to the king, as King of Ireland, or in other words, to Ireland itself. There is absolutely no subordination of any one nation of the commonwealth to any other. All are equal and held together by the fact that the king of each is also the king of the others. Hence the statement of Honorable P. B. Mignault, which Mr. Healy quotes from my letter without apparently, understanding it, that "allegiance to the crown is allegiance to our own country."

I said in my previous letter: "As at present constituted, the British Commonwealth of Nations is a 'personal union.' The sole legal tie uniting the otherwise independent nations is allegiance to the person of a common sovereign." May I illustrate this by a reference to examples of similar unions in the past. In 1603 James VI of Scotland succeeded to the throne of England as James I, but continued also to be King of Scotland. From that time until their union in 1700, the two countries, while they had always a common king, were not otherwise united. The Scotch owed him allegiance as King of Scotland, while the English owed him allegiance as King of England. Similar relations existed between Great Britain and Hanover from 1714, when the Elector of Hanover became also King of Great Britain, until terminated in 1837, by the accession of Queen Victoria to the British throne, who, because of her sex, could not become sovereign of Hanover.

Mr. Healy says: "Nor would disavowal of the oath exclude Ireland from the commonwealth, unless the rest of the dominions decided for it." But the rest of the dominions have decided for it. Moreover, the statement implies that there is some tie holding the dominions together, other than the common allegiance. What that other tie is Mr. Healy does not suggest, for the excellent reason that he cannot do so. There is no other tie, and there cannot be any other from the very nature of the union.

Mr. Healy says: "It is easy to becloud the issue of the oath of allegiance to the king with a lot of legalities and technicalities." But the abolition of the oath is a highly practical one. Without the oath, the form of government in force in the several dominions and embodied in the Irish Constitution, becomes unworkable. All executive acts of government are the acts of the king, though he always acts on the advice of his ministers in the dominion concerned. It may be said that the intervention of the king is a mere matter of form, but a change in that respect would involve a radical change in the form of government, from a limited monarchy to some sort of republic.

Ireland cannot have it both ways. She must decide either to go out or to stay in. Should she decide to go out, no attempt will be made to coerce her. Should she, however, decide to stay in, she must be prepared to accept the essential condition of membership, allegiance to the common sovereign. She cannot reap the benefits of union, without submitting to the one condition, which is its *sine qua non.*

W. L. SCOTT.

THE RENT IN THE EAST

London, England.

TO the Editor: I ask those who possess trained minds—for instance, theologians, lawyers and doctors—to reread the article by Placidus in THE COMMONWEAL of June 22. They will find it a mass of confused inference with hardly a plain fact stated, ending with an appeal to pity: bad evidence. His quotations are rightly to be suspected because they are often professedly incomplete; René Martel is admittedly partizan and Sir Robert Donald is of no authority whatever; there is no mention of writers whom Americans can more easily check, such as Haskins and Lord and Frank H. Simonds; and one quotation is downright dishonest, where Placidus cites Stanislav Grabski on Poland's eastern frontier in a context which would make the remark apply to Poland's western or northern frontiers.

Now about this population question in the Polish Corridor. If there has been a large German population there, it is chiefly because Prussia, during the Partitions, deliberately introduced German colonists in large numbers to "Germanize the Marches"—that was the Bismarckian policy in the Kulturkampf and by the Ostmarkenverein. Nevertheless, the basic population was Polish before the Partitions and remained Polish during them: the votes of Polish deputies to the Reichstag from the Corridor (or as I should say, Pomorze, the old name for that province) brought down Prince von Buelow. The popular pre-war German atlas, Putzger's "Historischer Schul-Atlas" (Leipzig, 1910), marks the Corridor as ethnographically Slavonic (page 29).

But Placidus introduces the German story of the Cashubes as a people in the Corridor distinct from the Poles, or as to be claimed equally by Germans and Poles. That is nonsense: it is a propaganda trick. The German authorities confused the census statistics in 1890 and after by making a special language classification, as though the Cashubes spoke a tongue distinct from both German and Polish, and specified some of the people as bilingual. On this we may notice, from pre-war German sources: "In 1906 the Regierungs präsident of Danzig reported that the majority of the Cashubes give their mother tongue as Polish. It should be considered for the future whether the classification 'Cashubian' should not be omitted in the next census, for the facts are that Cashubian and Polish mean exactly the same thing" ("Preussische Statistik," part 206, chapter I, page xxvii). Professor Ludwig Bernhard, a recognized authority on Polish affairs, wrote in 1907 of "Cashubia": "All this is predominantly Polish land. From 60 percent to 70 percent, and in the heart of Cashubia even 80 percent, are Poles" ("Das Polnischen Gemeinwesen in Preussischen Staat," Leipzig, page 362). Certainly Bismarck, who knew Pomorze well, had no idea of treating the Cashubes as a race distinct from the Poles or likely to favor Prussia, when he wrote of the "pagan" Cashubes near his wife's village of Reinfeld: "Close to Poland, Bütow the nearest town, one hears in the night how the wolves and the Cashubes howl" (March 11, 1847). Bismarck was a Prussian Junker. The pagan Cashubes were Catholics.

I can supply Placidus with a number of other authoritative, pre-war quotations from a variety of sources to show that the basic population of Pomorze is and has been Polish, despite the attempts of the last century to make it a Prussian territory. And I will say further that not only is Placidus adopting an unworthy subterfuge when he hints at the Cashubes being a race distinct from the Poles, but that he is on the wrong side of the struggle for civilization when he backs Prussia against Poland. Prussia stole. Prussia has been forced to make restitution.

GREGORY MACDONALD.

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THE PLAY AND SCREEN

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

A Season in Prospect

THERE is neither much heat nor much light emerging from the pre-season discussion of plays that are being tried out either on the road or at summer theatres in the country, preparatory to their Broadway showings.

One would think that the searing punishment of the times we are living in would produce at least the semblance of a distinct trend among the poets and even among the hack writers of the theatre. But the same confusion that reigns in the "leadership" of the nation's affairs seems to cloud the efforts of the dramatists. There is, after all, a unity in human affairs. We cannot have spiritual lethargy or bankruptcy in the conduct of public affairs, intimately affecting the lives of millions of people, without having that same lethargy spread to the writers who are trying to pick drama from individual problems. One is bound to color and condition the other. And so it happens that the advance reviews of forthcoming plays indicate little beyond the same sporadic revolts against tradition and the same muddled efforts to find a substitute for straight thinking that have cluttered up our stage for the last three years. I do not want to prejudge any plays in advance, so that I shall not mention plays nor authors by name at this time. But it is quite evident that the trend is still toward sensationalism and nervous excitement rather than stalwart ideas and ideals.

Perhaps, after all, we cannot expect the true product of discipline and hardship to emerge for some years after the experience itself. Certainly this was true of war plays. "What Price Glory," the first of the series, did not appear until about five years after the Great War. "Journey's End" required more than a decade to mature in the mind of its author. A certain mental paralysis is engendered during the actual experience of a great crisis which prevents its taking immediate form in the mind of the creative writer. What we must hope for is that the spiritual crisis through which we are passing (and it is far more spiritual than economic) will breed a measure of poetic greatness over the decade to come, and increasingly as the years lend a rich perspective.

Skyscraper Souls

IN THE late summer tour of the motion-picture houses which I have been making, nothing has impressed and oppressed me more than the marked acceleration in the race for sensation, accompanied, as you would expect, by increasing lack of veracity in detail. In the process, good ideas are spoiled. They are twisted out of all semblance to life in order to serve the dominating purpose of the Hollywood magnates. "Skyscraper Souls," pleasantly advertised as a "sexational" drama, is quite typical of the trend. Here we have, badly dramatized, the theme of the business man whose ambitions have rooted themselves in the ownership of the largest building in the world—a steel monument of the Empire State variety. Now, it is quite possible to imagine a man who so identifies himself with the physical product of his power that he becomes as pride-bound and as certain to meet disaster as the builders of the Tower of Babel. But Hollywood does not foster the kind of brains that can really write that kind of a story.

Nor, one might add, does Hollywood foster the kind of actors who can measure up to a drama of such implied proportions. Certainly Warren William, erstwhile of the stage, and now one of the screen's favorites, makes a sorry mess of that hard-fisted Mr. Dwight who has named a monster building after himself and lives in it and for it. Men of this type, at least in New York, are not apt to wander around in puckered trousers and high-waisted vests, nor to wear felt hats at the rakish angles once sported by Gascony cadets. Nor, be it added, can they force bank stocks to unbelievable heights and reap a fortune overnight by diabolically planned short sales—not, at least, to the proportion and extent indicated in this fantastic film. Merely as a detailed example of Hollywood's complete ignoring of realistic detail, it is worth noting that bank stocks are not quoted on the stock exchange, so that the film spectacle of yards of tape recording the rise and fall of "Manhattan-Seacoast" bank stock is an inherent absurdity. Bank stocks are traded in "over-the-counter." The rest of the picture is of a piece with this idiocy. The shooting of Dwight by his mistress, and her suicide by jumping off the hundredth story of the building are all part of the claptrap of a story intended to be about "big" people, but actually written and acted around fantasies of a hick imagination.

Doctor X

THE MYSTERY stories are also gaining prestige along with the trend toward new sensation. But here, at least, the films are indulging in something peculiar to their own nature—an ability to produce effects, transitions and illusions almost impossible on the traditional stage. In this respect alone, "Doctor X" is interesting. It lends credibility to the pseudo-science of the typical horror story by the mere freedom and scope of its technique. In all other respects, it takes rank with the average detective story seeking fresh sensation in the imaginary possibilities of science.

A series of particularly brutal murders take place at the height of the full moon. In each of them, an instrument is employed which is to be found only in the surgical research laboratoy of Doctor Xavier. He and his entire staff are placed under suspicion. He asks the police for forty-eight hours in which to try to track down the criminal by his own scientific methods. In the end, it is discovered that one of the group who has made a special study of cannibalism has invented a "synthetic flesh" with which he can perform incredible feats of brute strength. There is, of course, the inquisitive reporter, who falls in love with Doctor Xavier's daughter, and manages in the end to rescue all concerned from a horrible predicament. It is an extremely unpleasant tale.

The point worth noting, however, about this and other films of its type, is the vista they open up for the work of a really imaginative genius of the Jules Verne variety. Extreme realism and extreme fantasy are the supreme fields for the improved motion pictures of today. In the present instance, for example, the excellent color photography employed lends immeasurably to the illusion created. If the screen could only use its vast technical facilities to the end of building up real flights of imagination, we might easily have a new form of visual literature in its own right—fantastic feats to stimulate the mind instead of merely striking horror, and scenes of inventive power which might, in their very fantasy, lead to practical realization, even as the stories of Verne undoubtedly pushed the world on toward the actual conquest of undersea navigation and round-the-world transportation.

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BOOKS

Padraic Colum's Poetry

Poems, by Padraic Colum. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

MR. COLUM has repeatedly pointed out that the essence of Irish genius is its blending of realism and fantasy—but possibly many of us did not quite realize, until his collected poems were recently brought together, how comprehensively and characteristically his own work had effected this blending. Few poets write only poetry. Padraic Colum has himself written much else. But it is in poetry that the comprehensiveness of any poet's vision, the ecstasy and concentration of his message, lies. In the present volume the concentration and the comprehensiveness are both extraordinary. The bitter-sweet realism of those early folk dramas—"Thomas Muskerry," "The Land," "The Fiddler's House"—which Mr. Colum contributed to the Irish National Theatre, is crystallized in the cry of Dermott Donn Mac Morna's rueful wife, in "The Man Bereaved," in the unforgettable revery of "The Old Woman of the Roads" and the less-known ballad of "Nell the Rambler." His love of far-off legendary days is epic in "The Plougher":

> "Sunset and silence! A man; around him earth savage, earth broken;
> Beside him two horses, a plough!"

Also in the sorrowful lay of "Queen Gormlai," and in his classic translation of that classic fragment of pre-historic Celtic bluff beginning,

> "O woman, shapely as the swan,
> On your account I shall not die. . . ."

It is Catholic Ireland which speaks through his poetic drama of famine years, "The Miracle of the Corn," through the ironic "Burial of Saint Brendan," and in the universal loveliness, stretching all the way from Bethlehem to the nearest nursery, of his exquisite "Cradle Song" of the Irish peasant:

> "O, men from the fields!
> Come gently within,
> Tread softly, softly,
> O! men coming in.
> Mavourneen is going
> From me and from you
> Where Mary will fold him
> With mantle of blue!
>
> "From reek of the smoke
> And cold of the floor,
> And the peering of things
> Across the half-door.
> O, men from the fields!
> Soft, softly come through—
> Mary puts round him
> Her mantle of blue."

And all the while his love of earth's versatile pageantry is vivid in pictures of the "Tin Whistle Player," "Branding the Foals" or the crowded panorama of "Dublin Roads."

There is nothing particularly Franciscan about Padraic Colum, but his sympathetic, even fraternal, affection for bird and beast is notable. It is an affection true enough to paint them, also, realistically, without undue sentimentalizing. And if it reached its climax in the monkeys, hornets, "condors with shuttered, iron-heavy wings," even the "little bat astray," of that curious volume called "Creatures," it stretched backward to his unique love song of the otter, and to that noble vision of the old proud deer of Ireland, last of their race:

> "A stag with his hide all rough
> With the dew, and a doe and a fawn;
> Nearby, on their track on the mountain,
> I watched them, two and one,
> Down to the Shannon going—
> Did its waters cease to flow
> When they passed, they that carried the swiftness
> And the pride of long ago?
> The last of the troop that had heard
> Finn's and Oscar's cry;
> A doe and a fawn, and before
> A stag with head held high!"

Mr. Colum has never had, nor probably wished to have, Katharine Tynan's pure and somewhat perilous genius for melody—what A. E. has admired as her "natural gift for song." Often his meters are as harsh as his themes, and he seems to save beautiful rhythm for the stress of strong yet serene inspiration. Also, like most contemporary poets, he has experimented in the many forms of our experimental age, from the simple lyrics and ballads of the earlier volumes to somewhat Robinsonian blank verse, to striking imagism and free verse and prose-poems—or what Amy Lowell liked to call polyphonic prose. Indeed, with the inextinguishable individualism of the Celt, he has been not "all things to all men" but all things to himself.

> "I have sworn my friends shall have no parrot-speech from me;
> Who reads the verse I write
> Shall know the falcon's flight,
> The vision single and sure, the conquest of air and sun,"

he once declared. And because the vision is authentic even when erratic, he gives us a body of poems which every poet-lover is bound to hold close. Better than most moderns—because in spirit and song he is ancient as well as new—Padraic Colum has proved the truth of his own hieratic lines:

> "A song is more lasting than the voice of birds.
> A word is more lasting than the riches of the world!"

KATHERINE BRÉGY.

The Jesuit Educational System

The Jesuits and Education: The Society's Teaching, Principles and Practice, especially in Secondary Education in the United States, by William J. McGucken, S.J. Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company.

THIS work is wisely planned and it is well executed. It appears at a propitious moment. One does not need to be a specialist in the field of practical education to know that at the present moment the entire system of education in the United States, from the elementary grades to the university, is under discussion and criticism, and that potent voices are making themselves heard on all sides, calling for revision of stand-

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ards and curriculum and pleading for a reform of purposes and method. The Church, with its long and unbroken tradition of education, has shown profound concern for the present chaotic condition in pedagogical effort by the publication of the constitution, "Deus Scientiarum Dominus," which, it may be hoped, will have the effect of causing Catholic universities everywhere to conform to fixed and more elevated standards of excellence in higher education, and of offering to other universities models if not for imitation at least for emulation.

A comparison of the principles laid down in the "Deus Scientiarum Dominus" with the methods and the system of Jesuit secondary education outlined in this work, shows clearly the unity of aim and the identity of cultural purpose which underlie Catholic educational activity. With a view to dispel the many misunderstandings that exist regarding the Jesuit system of education, the author gives a brief and illuminating account of the origin of the "Ratio Studiorum" and its use in Jesuit schools during three centuries. His discussion of this famous document is marked by critical thoroughness and frankness. The "Ratio" is the basis of Jesuit pedagogy. How it made its entrance into American schools is dealt with in a special section devoted to Jesuit educational activity in the United States. Not the least interesting part of this section is the manner in which the varying ideals of education brought by the Jesuits from different countries in Europe are shown to have been changed and modified to meet the requirements of a new and different social and political environment. That the "Ratio" is not a mere set of rigid school regulations, but a document embodying a definite philosophy of education, is admirably brought out in the third section of the work, which traces the evolution of the Jesuit high school from the gymnasium type of school to the conventional American high school. Though the historical portion of the work, describing Jesuit educational activity in Europe and the United States, is cut down to a mere outline, its significance becomes apparent when the author undertakes to discuss the character and methods of Jesuit secondary schools.

Considering the range and the variety of the subjects which are included under the section dealing with the analysis and description of aims and methods in Jesuit secondary education, the author has accomplished his task in a manner that makes this section stand forth as a model of condensation and lucidity. He has carefully avoided the jargon of the professional educator, and there is a notable absence of reference to grades, credits, periods, units and those other denominatives that pass current in educational circles since the work of instruction became impersonal and mechanical. The system followed in Jesuit schools is described in all its details. Curriculum, methods of teaching, administration of schools, and even such matters as finance and athletics receive due consideration, and are discussed with the same spirit of detachment and objectivity that characterizes the entire book.

All these are matters of importance in any system of education, but they are of secondary significance compared to the philosophy which underlies the system. In his exposition of the objectives and the character of the Jesuit system the author is at his best. Educators will, naturally, pay much attention to this section of the work, but it should appeal to a much wider circle. An impasse has been reached in the solution of social and political problems. It may not be unreasonable to hope that the spirit which the Jesuits bring to the question of education might open the way to the settlement of difficulties in other departments of human endeavor. This spirit is frankly and uncompromisingly Catholic and

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religious. For the Jesuit there is no doubt as to the meaning of education; there is no need for "orientation courses" or "initiatory courses for freshmen." Religion is the center of life and science, and around religion courses and curricula group themselves logically and naturally. Though the recent constitution on seminaries and universities does not apply to secondary schools, it is noteworthy that the same pedagogical principles on which it rests are precisely those which the Jesuits seek to follow in their high schools. Father McGuckin has made a notable contribution to educational literature. His work should, to say the least, open a new period in the discussion of pedagogical problems.

PATRICK J. HEALY.

The Art of Living

What We Live By, by Ernest Dimnet. New York: Simon and Schuster. $2.50.

THERE is a quality at once touching and enlivening in this new book by the Abbé Dimnet. It was clearly evident in "The Art of Thinking" and, penetrating even the English translation, lent peculiar and lasting charm to "Les Soeurs Brontë." It is the quality, too rare at any time, of simple, perhaps naive, confidence in people as a whole, the faith that they not only long for higher things but that they actually, waiting only a guide and some safe and sane rules, are ready and anxious to climb heavenly steeps. Such faith sees in the average mind intellectual potentialities about which most persons are careless or sceptical; and it, of course, creates at the start an atmosphere of sympathy and understanding between the author and his audience.

Abbé Dimnet defines his book as a textbook of the art of being happy. "It purports," he says, "to be a plain guide to our self-perfecting, but it is in reality a manual of happy living." His definition is admirably fulfilled nor are the textbook qualities lacking. No book could be more practical than this, even when it scales the heights of contemplation or deals with the "cloud of unknowing" between ourselves and God. A preface defines the "two-storied house" of our moral being: the too ordinary, sordid downstairs existence, the clean-swept upstairs life.

The book itself, an effort to help and direct the upstairs tendencies in us, is divided into three parts, reminiscent, as is the whole volume, of Plotinus and his threefold ideal: "Verum, the True," "Pulchrum, the Beautiful," "Bonum, Beauty in Life." The method of procedure is simplicity itself. In many chapters the Platonic method of question, answer and argument is followed; in others the Abbé himself holds the floor and always to the best advantage. The art in teaching of proceeding from the known and familiar to the unknown and strange is perfectly accomplished. Before one knows it, he has left the easy, if discouraging, paths of his own ego and is exploring immortality, aesthetics, moral beauty; he leaves physics for metaphysics; in one leap he has left the proofs of the existence of God and with the blessed company of the saints he is actually learning some simple and practical rules for meditation and even for contemplation.

Abbé Dimnet is twice untruthful in his pages. "This is not a spiritual book," he writes. "It is merely a quest of what the True, the Beautiful and the Good can mean to us, the kind of meditation which anyone would embark upon in the hope of improving his moral chances." Yet the very definition just stated disproves his contention. His book is as spiritual in its way as any in a list of so-called holy books. And although as a

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second offense he declares he has no aptitude for ever becoming a spiritual writer, he belongs with Father Augustin Baker, Walter Hilton and a score of other specialists in holy matters, only he is happily more within our ken than they. Indeed, it is safe to say that more readers will be convinced of the joyful satisfaction in a religious life, will be led to meditation and learn the means thereof through the happy, humorous phrases of "What We Live By" than through the measured pages of "Holy Wisdom"!

The book is extraordinarily free from bias of any sort. It might, but for a certain ecstatic overtone which now and then like a quiet gleam of light makes its presence clear, have been written by a man full of any faith. It is Platonic, Stoic, Transcendental, and yet it is penetratingly Christian. Perhaps, indeed, the last chapter entitled "Vita"—that life-giving secret of the early Christians—is the thesis, the keynote of it all.

Ars artium regimen animarum. "The art of arts is the guidance of the soul." This Abbé Dimnet has chosen as his foreword, and this his own little book is well-fitted to supply.

MARY ELLEN CHASE.

Without Charm

Modern American Short Stories; edited by Edward J. O'Brien. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company. $2.50.

THIS substantial volume of 424 pages may be called a cross-section of American literary genius. Mr. O'Brien has long had a sort of pontifical position as regards this particular branch of literature, and, as he frankly states in a short introductory note, "this collection is drawn from my previous annual volumes and represents what I regard as the cream of those books. Each story has appeared in an American periodical since 1914." Of the collection as a whole it may be remarked that while one finds nothing here that equals the superb art of John Galsworthy or the subtlety and polish of H. G. Wells or Arnold Bennett, to name only one or two English masters, there is still much important work, and even a story or two that gives the jaded reviewer a genuine thrill.

The most notable thing about the symposium is that the authors all seem to be addressing an audience that for the most part, they are tacitly agreed, knows nothing in particular of any life beyond its own, and which is as a necessary corollary eager for every kind of detail about every imaginable sort of scene or situation. Only here and there in this comprehensive work does one come upon a story that seems to strike any higher, or more profound, note than is covered by the best possible plot the author had at hand with plenty of realistic detail. Only rarely are plot and performance merged into the rare charm of a story of pure atmosphere. This of course is to be looked for in Elinor Wylie, if in any American writer, and "Gideon's Revenge" is not a disappointment. But it is the only example in the whole book, unless Francis Buzzell's sketch can be brought into the category.

Here are plenty of good stories—interesting stories, some of which on their own particular level evince a very clever degree of workmanship, but the whole collection somehow leaves one with the impression that Mr. O'Brien in producing this omnibus volume has bidden a sort of fond but final farewell to the whole subject. In a word, and in the present reviewer's opinion, that great body of work known as the American short story does not, considered as a whole, yet approach greatness, nor is there any particularly original note struck even once in this general concert that seems to promise a wholly new tradition.

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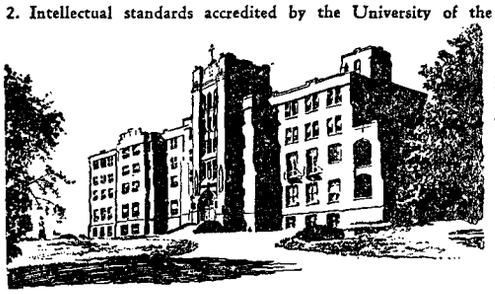

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Briefer Mention

Poetry and Criticism of the Romantic Movement; edited by O. J. Campbell, J. F. A. Pyre and Bennett Weaver. New York: F. S. Crofts and Company. $3.50.

THE PRESENT anthology (for school use, of course) differs from others of the same kind chiefly by reason of having been limited to the six major poets and of a resolve to include liberal portions of (a) poets' prose and (b) critical comment from the essayists and reviewers of the period. The verse quotations are fairly standard, the weakest section being that devoted to Scott. Concerning the prose there will be many differences of opinion. Why quote, for example, Wordsworth's immature "Letter to the Bishop of Landaff" and omit the "Tract on the Conventions of Cintro"? Why give Shelley's "Essay on Christianity" and leave out all vestiges of Byron's interesting correspondence? Nor is it easy to see why, in a book of this character, the reviews should be included at all. The student can easily find them elsewhere, and it seems a pity he should be made to pay for them. One must add that the biographical and critical remarks are frequently jejune, poorly written and even misleading. Four lines on Blake, for instance, could hardly have been designed with less skill by a sophomore. But this is a Crofts book, and that usually means that a volume has some reason for existing. Perhaps some day the professors will adapt anthologies for classroom use and then employ a literary man who knows how to write and what to say for the composition of the accompanying notes. It seems a pity that college men should have set before them such illustriously poor samples of critical expression as Professors Campbell, Pyre and Weaver afford.

From Here to Yender, by Marion Nicholl Rawson. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Incorporated. $3.75.

OLD NEW ENGLAND folk-lore and folk-ways are here described with affection and often with humor by the author of "When Antiques Were Young" and "Candle Days." Particularly life at the old inns and the way of travel during the seventeenth, eighteenth and early part of the last century, are pictured. Other aspects of the life of the times, from gravestones to bundling, fill in the background. The cult of this sort of thing can be painfully boring to those who have not taken it up, but for those who have, it can be, like fancy horticulture or sailing gear and practice, an absorbing hobby. It is hardly a cultural amenity because it seems somehow to be opposed to universal values and to emphasize exclusive crotchets that are more rare than beautiful. The book is illustrated with drawings and sketches.

CONTRIBUTORS

GEOGRE K. MCCABE is a member of the faculty of the University of Pittsburgh.

MAX JORDAN, well-known former Washington correspondent, is one of THE COMMONWEAL correspondents abroad.

REV. WILLIAM MICHAEL DUCEY, O.S.B., of St. Anselm's Priory, Washington, D. C., is now doing research work abroad.

CATHERINE M. BRESNAN is a New York poet.

FLOYD KEELER is a writer on historical and theological subjects.

KATHERINE BRÉGY is a critic and poet, and the author of "The Poet's Chantry" and "Poets and Pilgrims."

REV. PATRICK J. HEALY is dean of the faculty of theology in the Catholic University of America. He is the author of "The Valerian Persecution" and "Historial Christianity and the Social Question."

MARY ELLEN CHASE is professor of English literature in Smith College and the author of "The Golden Asse and Other Essays."

JOSEPH LEWIS FRENCH, poet and anthologist, is the author of "Christ in Art."

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